

THE JEW:

A

COMEDY.

PERFORMED AT THE

Theatre Royal, Drury Lane.



BY

RICHARD CUMBERLAND, Esq.

THE SIXTH EDITION.



LONDON:

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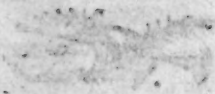
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1793.

PROLOGUE

Spoken by Mr. PALMER.

OUR Comic Bard, before whose roving eye
Kingdoms and States in magic vision lie,
Sweeps o'er the map, and with a partial smile
Fixes at length on his beloved Isle:
He views her deck'd in all her natural charms,
And wrapt in peace, amidst the din of arms.
"Here, here," he cries, "on ALBION's fostering breast,
The Arts are shelter'd, and the Muses rest,
Here I will build my stage by moral rule
And scenic measure, here erect my school;
A school for prejudice:—Oh! that my stroke
Cou'd strip that creeper from the British Oak!
Twin'd round his gen'rous shaft, the tangled weed
Sheds on the undergrowth its baneful seed."
This said, he bids us strike the daring blow,
That lays his fame or this defiler low.

And now our PROLOGUE speaks—In former days
Prologues were abstracts of their several Plays;
But now, like guilty men, who dread their doom,
We talk of ev'ry thing but what's to come.
As for our fable, little I'll unfold:
For out of little much cannot be told.
'Tis but one species in the wide extent
Of prejudice, at which our shaft is sent,
'Tis but this simple lesson of the heart—
Judge not the man by his exterior part:
Virtue's strong root in ev'ry soil will grow,
Rich ores lie buried under piles of snow.

If to your candour we appeal this night
For a poor Client, for a luckless Wight,
Whom Bard ne'er favour'd, whose sad fate has been
Never to share in one applauding scene,
In Souls like your's there should be found a place
For ev'ry Victim of unjust disgrace.

PROLOGUE

Spoken by MR. PALMER.

Dramatis Personæ.

SIR STEPHEN BERTRAM	MR. AICKIN.
FREDERIC, his Son - - -	MR. PALMER.
CHARLES RATCLIFFE -	MR. WROUGHTON.
SAUNDERS, First Clerk to } SIR STEPHEN - - - }	MR. MATTOCKS.
SHEVA, a JEW - - -	MR. BANNISTER.
JABAL, his Man - - -	MR. SUETT.
<hr/>	
MRS. RATCLIFFE - - -	MRS. HOPKINS.
ELIZA RATCLIFFE - - -	MISS FARREN.
MRS. GOODISON - - -	MRS. BOOTH.
DORCAS, the Jew's Servant	MISS TIDSWELL.

SCENE, LONDON.

THE JEW:

COMEDY.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*An Apartment in the House of Sir
STEPHEN BERTRAM.*

SIR STEPHEN BERTRAM, FREDERIC.

Sir STEPHEN BERTRAM.

WHY do you press me for reasons I'm not bound to give? If I chuse to dismiss an assistant clerk from my counting-house, how does it concern you?

Fred. That clerk you took at my recommendation and request; I am therefore interested to hope you have no reasons for dismissing him that affect his character.

Sir Step. I am your father, Sir, and in this house sole master; I have no partners to account to; nor will I brook any comments on my conduct from my son.

Fred. Yet, as your son, may I not, without risking your displeasure, offer one humble word upon the part of a defenceless absent friend?

Sir Step. A friend!

Fred. Yes, Sir, I hope I need not blush to call Charles Ratcliffe friend. His virtues, his misfortunes

B

tunes, his integrity, (you'll undeceive me if I err) have much endear'd him to me.

Sir Step. Say rather his connections: Come, I see where all his friendship points—to folly, to disgrace—therefore no more of it! Break off! new friendships will not cost you dear; 'tis better you should cease to call him friend, than put it in his power to call you brother. In one word, Frederic, I never will accept of Ratcliffe's sister as my daughter-in-law—nor, if I can prevent it, shall you so far forget yourself as to make her your mistress.

Fred. Mistress! Good Heaven!—But I'll restrain myself.—You never saw Miss Ratcliffe.

Sir Step. I wish you never had—But you have seen your last of her, or me—I leave it to your choice. [Exit.

FREDERIC.

I have no choice to make; she is my wife—and if to take beauty, virtue and elegance without fortune, when my father would have me take fortune without them, is a crime that merits disinheritance, I must meet my punishment as I can. The only thing I dread is the severe but honorable reproof of my friend Ratcliffe, to whom this marriage is a secret, and whose disinterested resentment I know not how to face: I must dissemble with him still, for I am unprepar'd with my defence, and he is here.

CHARLES RATCLIFFE enters.

Ch. Well met, Frederic!

Fred. I wish I could say so.

Ch. Why? what's the matter now?

Fred. I have no good news to tell you.

Ch. I don't expect it, you are not made to be the bearer of good news; knavery engrosses all fortune's

fortune's favor, and fools run up and down with the tidings of it.

Fred. You are still a philosopher.

Ch. I cannot tell that till I am tried with prosperity: it is that which sets our failings in full view, adversity conceals them.—But come, discuss: tell me in what one part of my composition the ingenious cruelty of Fortune can place another blow.

Fred. By my soul, Charles, I am ashamed to tell you, because the blow is now given by a hand I wish to reverence. You know the temper of Sir Stephen Bertram: he is my father, therefore I will not enlarge upon a subject, that would be painful to us both. It is with infinite regret I have seen you (nobly descended, and still more nobly endow'd) earning a scanty maintenance at your desk in his counting-house: It is a slavery you are now releas'd from.

Ch. I understand you; Sir Stephen has no further commands for me. I will go to him, and deliver up my keys. [Going.]

Fred. Have patience for a moment,—Do you guess his reasons for this hasty measure?

Ch. What care I for his reasons, when I know they cannot touch my honor!

Fred. Oh! Charles, my heart is penetrated with your situation? What will become of those beloved objects—?

Ch. Why, what becomes of all the objects misery lays low? they shrink from sight, and are forgotten.—You know I will not hear you on this subject: 'twas not with my consent you ever knew there were such objects in existence.

Fred. I own it; but in this extremity methinks you might relax a little from that rigid honor.

Ch. Never; but as the body of a man is brac'd by winter, so is my resolution by adversity. On

this point only we can differ. Why will my friend persist in urging it?

Fred. I have done. You have your way.

Ch. Then with your leave I'll go to your father.

Fred. Hold! Here comes one that supercedes all other visitors—old Sheva, the rich Jew, the meekest muck-worm in the city of London: How the old Hebrew casts about for prodigals to snap at! I'll throw him out a bait for sport.

Ch. No, let him pass: what sport can his infirmities afford?

SHEVA the JEW enters.

Sheva. The good day to you, my young master! How is it with your health, I pray? Is your father Sir Stephen Bertram, and my very good patron, to be spoken with?

Fred. Yes, yes, he is at home, and to be spoken with, under some precaution, Sheva: if you bring him money, you would be welcome.

Sheva. Ah! that is very good. Monies is welcome every where.

Fred. Pass on, pass on! no more apologies—Good man of money, save your breath to count your guineas. [*Exit SHEVA.*]
That fellow would not let his shadow fall upon the earth, if he could help it.

Ch. You are too hard upon him. The thing is courteous.

Fred. Hang him! he'll bow for half a crown. His carcase and its covering would not coin into a ducat, yet he is a moving mine of wealth.

Ch. You see these characters with indignation. I contemplate them with pity. I have a fellow-feeling for poor Sheva: he is as much in poverty as I am, only it is poverty of another species: He
wants

wants what he has, I have nothing and want every thing. Misers are not unuseful members of the community; they act like dams to rivers, hold up the stream that else wou'd run to waste, and make deep water where there wou'd be shallows.

Fred. I recollect you was his rescuer; I did not know you were his advocate.

Ch. 'Tis true I snatch'd him out of jeopardy. My countrymen, with all their natural humanity, have no objection to the hustling of a Jew. The poor old creature was most roughly handled.

Fred. What was the cause!

Ch. I never ask'd the cause: There was a hundred upon one; that was cause enough for me to make myself a second to the party over match'd. I got a few hard knocks, but I brought off my man.

Fred. The synagogue shou'd cannonize you for the deed.

SHEVA returns.

Sheva. Aha! there is no business to be done: there is no talking to your fader. He is not just now in the sweetest of all possible tempers—Any thing, Mr. Bertram, wanted in my way?

Fred. Yes, Sheva, there is enough wanted in your way, but I doubt it is not in your will to do it.

Sheva. I do always do my utmost for my principals: I never spare my pains when business is going: be it ever such a trifle, I am thankful. Every little helps a poor man like me.

Fred. You speak of your spirit, I suppose, when you call yourself a poor man. All the world knows you roll in riches.

Sheva. The world knows no great deal of me: I do not deny but my monies may roll a little,

but for myself I do not roll at all. I live sparingly and labor hard, therefore I am called a miser—I cannot help it—an uncharitable dog, I must endure it—a blood-sucker, an extortioner, a Shylock—hard names, Mr. Frederic, but what can a poor Jew say in return, if a Christian chuses to abuse him?

Fred. Say nothing, but spend your money like a Christian.

Sheva. We have no abiding place on earth, no country, no home: every body rails at us, every body flouts us, every body points us out for their may-game and their mockery. If your play-writers want a butt or a buffoon, or a knave to make sport of, out comes a Jew to be baited and buffeted through five long acts for the amusement of all good Christians—Cruel sport, merciless amusement! hard dealings for a poor stray sheep of the scatter'd flock of Abraham! How can you expect us to shew kindness, when we receive none?

Ch. (advancing) That is true, friend Sheva, I can witness; I am sorry to say there is too much justice in your complaint.

Sheva. Bless this goot light! I did not see you—'Tis my very goot friend Mr. Ratcliffe, as I live. Give me your pardon, I pray you, Sir, give me your pardon; I should be sorry to say in your hearing that there is no charity for the poor Jews. Truly, Sir, I am under very great obligations to you for your generous protection t'other night, when I was mob'd and mal-treated, and, for aught I can tell, should have been massacred, had not you stood forward in my defence. Truly, Sir, I bear it very thankfully in my remembrance; truly I do, yes truly.

Fred.

A COMEDY.

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Fred. Leave me with him, Charles: I'll hold him in discourse whilst you go to my father.

[*Exit CHARLES.*]

Sheva. Oh! it was goot deed, very goot deed, to save a poor Jew from a pitiless mob, and I am very grateful to you, worthy Mr. — Ah! the gentleman is gone away: that is another thing.

Fred. It is so, but your gratitude need not go away at the same time! you are not bound to make good the proverb—“*Out of sight, out of mind.*”

Sheva. No, no, no; I am very much oblig'd to him, not only for my life, but for the monies and the valuables I had about me: I had been hustled out of them all but for him.

Fred. Well then, having so much gratitude for his favours, you have now an opportunity of making some return to him.

Sheva. Yes, yes, and I do make him a return of my thanks and goot wishes very heartily. What can a poor Jew say more? I do wish him all goot things, and give him all goot words.

Fred. Good words indeed! What are they to a man, who is cast naked upon the wide world, with a widow'd mother and a defenceless sister, who look up to him for their support?

Sheva. Good lack, good lack! I thought he was in occupations in your fader's counting-house.

Fred. He was, and from his scanty pittance piously supported those poor destitutes: that source is now stopp'd, and as you, when in the midst of rioters, was in want of a protector, so is he in the midst of his misfortunes in want of some kind friend to rescue him.

Sheva. Oh dear, oh dear! this world is full of sadness and of sorrow; miseries upon miseries; unfortunates by hundreds and by thousands, and

poor Sheva has but two weak eyes to find tears for them all.

Fred. Come, come, Sheva, pity will not feed the hungry nor clothe the naked. Ratcliffe is the friend of my heart: I am helpless in myself; my father, though just, is austere in the extreme; I dare not resort to him for money, nor can I turn my thoughts to any other quarter for the loan of a small sum in this extremity, except to you.

Sheva. To me! good lack, to me! What will become of me? what will Sir Stephen say? He is full of monies; but then again he is a close man, very austere, as you say, and very just, but not very generous.

Fred. Well, well, let me have your answer.

Sheva. Yes, yes, but my answer will not please you without the monies: I shall be a Jewish dog, a baboon, an imp of Beelzebub, if I don't find the monies; and when my monies is all gone, what shall I be then? An ass, a fool, a jack-a-dandy! Oh dear, oh dear!—Well, there must be conditions, look you.

Fred. To be sure: security twice secur'd; premium and interest, and bond and judgment into the bargain: only enable me to preserve my friend, give me that transport, and I care not what I pay for it.

Sheva. Mercy on your heart! What haste and hurry you are in. How much did you want? One hundred pounds did you say?

Fred. More than one, more than one.

Sheva. Ah, poor Sheva! More than one hundred pounds! What! so much as two hundred? 'Tis a great deal of monies.

Fred. Come, friend Sheva, at one word—three hundred pounds.

Sheva. Mercies defend me, what a sum!

Fred.

Fred. Accommodate me with three hundred pounds; make your own terms; consult your conscience in the bargain, and I will say you are a good fellow. Oh! Sheva, did you but know the luxury of relieving honor, innocence and beauty from distress.

Sheva. Oh! 'tis great luxury I dare say, else you wou'd not buy it at so high a price. Well, well, well! I have thought a little, and if you will come to my poor cabin in Duke's Place, you shall have the monies.

Fred. Well said, my gallant Sheva! Shall I bring a bond with me to fill up?

Sheva. No, no, no: we have all those in my shop.

Fred. I don't doubt it—All the apparatus of an usurer [*aside*]*—Farewell, Sheva! be ready with your instruments, I care not what they are: only let me have the money, and you may proceed to dissection as soon after as you please.*

[*Exit FRED.*]

SHEVA alone.

Heigho! I cannot chuse but weep—Sheva, thou art a fool—Three hundred pounds by the day, how much is that in the year?—Oh dear, oh dear! I shall be ruin'd, starv'd, wasted to a watch-light. Bowels, you shall pinch for this: I'll not eat flesh this fortnight: I'll suck the air for nourishment; I'll feed upon the steam of an alderman's kitchen, as I put my nose down his area.—Well, well! but soft, a word, friend Sheva! Art thou not rich? monstrous rich, abominably rich? and yet thou livest on a crust—Be it so! thou dost stint thine appetites to pamper thine affections; thou dost make thyself to live in poverty, that the poor may live in plenty. Well, well!

well! so long as thou art a miser only to thine own cost, thou may'st hug thyself in this poor habit, and set the world's contempt at naught.

CHARLES RATCLIFFE *enters, and speaks without noticing the Jew.*

Ch. Unfeeling, heartless man, I've done with you. I'll dig, beg, perish, rather than submit to such unnatural terms—I may remain: my mother and my sister must be banish'd to a distance—Why, this Jew, this usurer, this enemy to our faith, whose heart is in his bags, wou'd not have us'd me thus—I'll question him—Sheva!

Sheva. What is your pleasure?

Ch. I do not know the word.

Sheva. What is your will then? speak it.

Ch. Sheva!—You have been a son—you had a mother—do'st remember her?

Sheva. Goot lack, goot lack! do I remember her!—

Ch. Did'st love her, cherish her, support her?

Sheva. Ah me! ah me! it is as much as my poor heart will bear to think of her—I wou'd have died—

Ch. Thou hast affections, feelings, charities—

Sheva. I am a man, Sir, call me how you please.

Ch. I'll call you Christian then, and this proud merchant Jew.

Sheva. I shall not thank you for that compliment.

Ch. And had'st thou not a sister too?

Sheva. No, no sister, no broder, no son, no daughter: I am a solitary being, a waif on the world's wide common.

Ch. And thou hast hoarded wealth, till thou art sick with gold even to plethory: thy bags run
over

over with the spoils of usury, thy veins are glutted with the blood of prodigals and gamesters.

Sheva. I have enough : something perhaps to spare.

Ch. And I have nothing, nothing to spare but miseries, with which my measure overflows—by Heaven, it racks my soul, to think that those beloved sufferers should want, and this thing so abound [*aside.*—Now, Sheva, now, if you and I were out of sight of man, benighted in some desert, wild as my thoughts, naked as my fortune, shou'd you not tremble ?

Sheva. What should I tremble for ?—You cou'd not harm a poor defenceless aged man.

Ch. Indeed, indeed I could not harm you, Sheva, whilst I retain'd my senses.

Sheva. Sorrow disturbs them : yes, yes, it is sorrow. Ah me, ah me ! poor Sheva in his time has been driven mad with sorrow.—'Tis a hard world.

Ch. Sir, I have done you wrong—You pity me, I'm sure you do : those tones cou'd never proceed but from a feeling heart.

Sheva. Try me, touch me ; I am not made of marble.

Ch. No, on my life you are not.

Sheva. Nor, yet of gold extorted from the prodigal : I am no shark to prey upon mankind. What I have got, I have got by little and little, working hard and pinching my own bowels—I cou'd say something, it is in my thoughts ; but no, I will not say it here : this is the house of trade ; that is not to my purpose—Come home with me, so please you—'Tis but a little walk, and you shall see what I have shewn to no man, Sheva's real heart—I do not carry it in my hand—Come, come, I pray you come along. [*Exeunt.*

END OF ACT I.

 ACT II.

 SCENE, *a Chamber.*

 ELIZA RATCLIFFE *alone.*

ELIZA.

OH! happy me, possess'd of all my heart delights in; and miserable me, for having ruin'd what I love. Alas! poor Bertram, fond to desperation, generous to thy destruction!—Why then did I marry, wherefore did I suffer him to be the victim of fatal passion? What power perverted understanding, heart, humanity? What power but that, which can do all things, good or ill, make virtue and unmake it, animate our courage and extinguish it?—Love is at once my crime and my excuse. Good heavens! my mother.—

Mrs. RATCLIFFE enters.

[ELIZA takes her hand and kisses it.

Mrs. R. Eliza! Child! what means this more than usual agitation?

Eliza. Is it then more than usual?

Mrs. R. You weep—

Eliza. Do I? 'Tis natural, when I contemplate a face so dear and so decay'd, furrow'd with cares and sorrows for my sake.—Ah! my dear mother, you have lov'd me much too well.

Mrs. R. My darling, can that be, seeing I love
your

your brother also? You share my heart between you.

Eliza. Give all to him: he has deserv'd it better.

Mrs. R. Heaven blefs him to the extent of his deservings! On him rests all our hope; to him we cling, as to the last dear relick of our wreck'd nobility. But he's a man, *Eliza*, and endow'd with strength and fortitude to struggle in the storm; we are weak helpless women, and can do no more than suffer and submit.

Eliza. True, but there is a part allotted to the weakest, even to me; an humble one indeed, and easily perform'd, since nothing is requir'd but to obey, to love you and to honour you.

Mrs. R. And you have done it faithfully, my child.

Eliza. You think so, my dear mother, but your praise is my reproach.—Oh! had I now a crime upon my conscience, and shou'd I kneel thus and beg for pardon at your feet, what wou'd you say?

Mrs. R. Astonishment might keep me silent for a while, but my first words wou'd be to pity and forgive you.

Eliza. That I can err this guilty hand will witness.—Well may you start. That hand is *Bertram's*; and that ring, pledg'd at the altar, was put by him this very morning—I am *Bertram's* wife.

Mrs. R. Rise, quit this supplicating posture till you find yourself in presence of some person less dispos'd to pardon you than I am.

Eliza. How mild is that rebuke! how merciful! Your eye, like Nature's, penetrates my heart: you see it weak as woman's resolution is, impassion'd not impure, conquer'd but not corrupted.

Mrs. R. I see myself reflected in my child: justice demands a censure; conscious recollection
checks

checks me from pronouncing it: but you have a brother, whose high-foaring spirit will not brook clandestine marriages: your husband has a father of another spirit as I fear. Alas! my child, betwixt the lofty and the low you must steer well to keep a steady course.

Eliza. I see my danger; and tho' Bertram's ardor painted it in fainter colours than it's true complexion may demand, yet I should hope the nature of a father cannot be so stern as never to forgive a choice that disappoints, but, let me hope, does not disgrace him.

Mrs. R. The name of Ratcliffe cannot. A daughter of your house in better days wou'd hardly have advanc'd his knighthood higher than her foot-cloth.

Eliza. Aye, Madam, but the pride of birth does but add stings to poverty. We must forget those days.

Mrs. R. Your father did not.

Eliza. Ah, my father!—

Mrs. R. Your brother never will.

Eliza. Yet he is humble for our sakes. Think what he does. Good heavens, my husband's father's clerk. Dear Madam, tell me why he did not rather go where his courage call'd him, where his person wou'd have grac'd the colors that he carried.

Mrs. R. Child, child, what colors? Surely you forget the interdiction of a father barr'd him from that service.

Eliza. Alas, alas!

Mrs. R. The bread wou'd choak him, that he earn'd under a father's curse.

Eliza. We have bled for our opinions, and we have starv'd for them: the axe and sword and poverty have made sad havoc with our family:
tis

'tis time we were at peace. The world is now before us : on this hour depends the fate of all perhaps that are to come. Frederic is with his father ; he is determin'd to avow his marriage, and to meet the consequences, I never saw Sir Stephen, and have nothing but conjecture to direct me ; I tremble for the event.

Mrs. R. 'Tis a distressful interim ; and it is now the hour when I expect your brother.

Eliza. Oh ! that is worse than all ; for pity's sake hide me from him till Frederic returns : let me retire.

Mrs. R. Come then, my child ! I know not what it is, but something whispers me that all will yet be well.

Eliza. Ten thousand blessings on you for that cheering hope : how my heart bounds to embrace it ! 'Tis an auspicious omen, and I hail it like the voice of inspiration. | *Exeunt.*

SCENE *changes to SHEVA'S House.*

DORCAS, and afterwards JABAL.

Dorcas. Why Jabal, I say Jabal ? Where are you, sluggard ?

Jabal. Here am I, mother Dorcas ! Oh ! what a starving star was I born under, to be the rich Jew's poor servant. No rest, no peace whilst you are awake. Lud-a-mercy ! if you did but know how your pipe echoes in this empty house.

Dorcas. Child, child, you must not think to be idle here.

Jabal. What wou'd you have me do ? Brush the bare walls for a breakfast ? A spider could not make a meal upon them.

Dorcas.

Dorcas. I warrant thou hast fill'd thy belly, cormorant.

Jabal. I have not had a belly-full since I belong'd to you. You take care there shall be no fire in the kitchen, master provides no prog upon the shelf, so between you both I have plenty of nothing but cold and hunger.

Dorcas. Hunger indeed! How shou'd thy stomach ever be fill'd when there is no bottom to it? 'tis like the Dead Sea, fathomless.

Jabal. 'Tis like the Dead Sea so far, that neither fish nor flesh are to be found within it.

Dorcas. Sirrah! you have a better master than you think for. It is unknown the charities he gives away.

Jabal. You're right, it is unknown; at least I never found the secret out. If it is charity to keep an empty cupboard, he has that to boast of; the very rats wou'd run away from such a caterer. If it is charity to clothe the naked, here is a sample of it: examine this old drab, you may count the threads without spectacles; a spider's web is a warm blanket to it. If it is charity to feed the hungry, I have an empty stomach at his service, to which his charity at this present moment wou'd be very seasonable.

Dorcas. You must mortify your carnal appetites: how often shall I teach you that lesson?

Jabal. Every time I set eyes upon you.

Dorcas. Hav'n't you the credit of belonging to one of the richest men in the city of London?

Jabal. I wish I was turnspit to the poorest cook's shop instead. Oh! if my master had but fixt his abode at Pye corner, or Pudding-lane, or Fish-street-hill, or any of those savoury places?—What am I the fatter for the empty dignity of
Duke's

Duke's Place? I had rather be a miser's heir than a miser's servant.

Dorcas. And who knows what may happen? Master has not a relation I ever heard of in the universal world.

Jabal. No, he has starv'd them all out. A camelion could not live with him; he wou'd grudge him even the air he feeds on.

Dorcas. For shame, slanderer! His good deeds will shine out in time.

Jabal. I shan't stand in their light; they may shine through me, for I am grown transparent in his service.—Had not he like to have been torn to pieces t'other day by the mob for whipping a starv'd cat out of his area?

Dorcas. And whose fault was that but thine, ungracious boy, for putting it there? I am sure I have cause to bless the gentleman that sav'd him.—But hush! Here comes my good master; and as I live the very gentleman with him—Ah! then I guess what is going forward.

Enter SHEVA and CHARLES RATCLIFFE.

Sheva. So, so, so! What's here to do with you? Why are you not both at your work?—*Dorcas,* a cup of cold water—I am very thirsty.

[*Exit. DORCAS.*

Jabal. Are you not rather hungry too, Sir?

Sheva. Hold your tongue, puppy! Get about your business; and here! take my hat, clean it carefully, but mind you do not brush it—that will wear off the nap.

Jabal. The nap indeed! There is not shelter for a flea.

[*Exit.*

Sheva. Aha! I am tired. I beg your pardon, Mr. Ratcliffe; I am an old man. Sit you down, I pray you, sit you down, and we will talk a little.

C

[*DORCAS*

[DORCAS brings a glass of water] So, so! that is right. Water is goot.—Fie upon you, Dorcas; why do you not offer the gla'ss to my guest before me?

Dorcas. Lord love him! I'd give him wine, if I had it.

Sheva. No, no, it is goot water, it is better than wine: wine is heating, water is cooling; wine costs monies, water comes for nothing—Your good health, Sir—Oh! 'tis delicious, it is satisfying: I was very empty before, my stomach was craving, now I am quite content.—Go your ways, Dorcas, go your ways.—[Exit DORCAS.] Sir, I have nothing to ask you to but that water, which you wou'd not drink: 'twas very goot water notwithstanding.—Ah! Mr. Ratcliffe, I must be very saving now: I must pinch close.

Ch. For what? Are you not rich enough to allow yourself the common comforts of life.

Sheva. Oh yes, oh yes! I am rich to be sure—Mercy on me, what a world of monies thou'd I now have, if I had no pity in my heart! But it melts and melts, or else—Oh! dear me, what a heap it wou'd have been!

Ch. Pardon me, Sir, if I say there are some seeming contradictions in your character, which I cannot reconcile. You give away your money, it should seem, with the generosity of a prince, and I hear you lament over it in the language of a miser.

Sheva. That is true, that is very true: I love my monies, I do love them dearly; but I love my fellow-creatures a little better.

Ch. Being so charitable to others, why then will you not spare a little to yourself?

Sheva. Because I am angry with myself for being such a baby, a child, a chicken. Your people

people do not love me, what business have I to love your people? I am a Jew; my fathers up to Abraham all were Jews—Merciless mankind, how you have persecuted them! My family is all gone, it is extinct, my very name will vanish out of memory when I am dead—I pray you pardon me; I'm very old, and apt to weep; I pray you pardon me.

Ch. I am more dispos'd to subscribe to your tears than to find fault with them.

Sheva. Well, well, well! 'tis natural for me to weep when I reflect upon their sufferings and my own.—Sir, you shall know—but I won't tell you my sad story: you are young and tender-hearted—It is all written down—You shall find it with my papers at my death.

Ch. Sir! At your death?—

Sheva. Yes, sure, I must die some time or other: tho' you have sav'd my life once, you cannot save it always: I did tell you, Mr. Ratcliffe, I wou'd shew you my heart. Sir, it is a heart to do you all possible good whilst I live, and to pay you the debt of gratitude when I die: I believe it is the only one I owe to the pure benevolence of my fellow-creatures.

Ch. I am sorry you have found mankind so ungrateful.

Sheva. Not so, not so; I might perhaps have found them grateful, if I had let them know their benefactor; I did relieve their wants; but I did not court their thanks: they did eat my bread, and hooted at me for a miser.

JABAL enters.

Jabal. A gentleman who says his name is Bertram, waits to speak with you—I fancy he comes

to borrow money, for he looks wond'rous melancholy.

Sheva. Hold your tongue, knave; what is it to you what he comes for?

Jabal. I am sure he does not come for dinner, for he has not brought it with him.

Sheva. I pray you, Mr. Ratcliffe, pass out that way, I wou'd not have you meet.—Admit Mr. Bertram. [*Exeunt JABAL and CHARLES.*]

FREDERIC enters.

Sheva. You are welcome, Mr. Bertram: our business may quickly be dispatch'd. You want three hundred pounds—I have made shift to scrape that sum together, and it is ready for you.

Fred. Alas, Sheva! since last I saw you I am so totally undone, that it wou'd now be robbery to take your money.—My father has expell'd me from his house.

Sheva. Why? for what cause?

Fred. I have married—

Sheva. Well, that is natural enough.

Fred. Married without his knowledge—

Sheva. So did he without your's. What besides?

Fred. Married a wife without a farthing.

Sheva. Ah! that is very silly, I must say.

Fred. You cou'd not say so, did you know the lady.

Sheva. That may be, but I do not know the lady: you have not nam'd her to me.

Fred. The sister of Charles Ratcliffe.

Sheva. Ah! to Miss Ratcliffe? Is it so? And she is goot and lovely, but she has no monies; and that has made your fader very angry with you?

Fred. Furious, irreconcilable.

Sheva.

Sheva. Why truly, monies is a goot thing, and your fader is not the only man in England that does think so : I confes I'm very much of his mind in respect of monies.

Fred. I know you are ! therefore keep your money, and good morning to you.

Sheva. Hold, hold, be not so hasty ! If I do love my monies, it may be because I have it in my power to tender them to you.

Fred. But I have said I never can repay you whilst you are in this world.

Sheva. Perhaps I shall be content to be repaid when I am out of it—I believe I have a pretty many *post-obits* of that sort upon the file.

Fred. I do not rightly understand you.

Sheva. Then pray you have a little patience till I'm better understood.—Sir Stephen had a match for you in view.

Fred. He had.

Sheva. What was the lady's fortune ?

Fred. Ten thousand pounds.

Sheva. That is a goot round sum ; but you did not love her, and you do love your wife.

Fred. As dearly as you love your money.

Sheva. A little better we will hope, for I do lend my monies to my friend.—For instance, take these bills, three hundred pounds—What ails you ?—They are goot bills, they are bank—Oh ! that I had a sack full of them !—Come, come, I pray you take them. They will hire you very pretty lodging, and you will be very happy with your pretty wife—I pray you take them.—Why will you be so hard with a poor Jew as to refuse him a goot bargain, when you know he loves to lay his monies out to profit and advantage ?

Fred. Are you in earnest ? You astonish me.

Sheva. I am a little astonish'd too, for I did

never see a man so backward to take money : you are not like your fader. I am afraid you are a little proud.

Fred. You shall not say so: I accept your generous tender.

Sheva. I wish it was ten thousand pounds, then your goot fader wou'd be well content.

Fred. Yes, of two equal fortunes I believe he wou'd be good enough to let me take my choice.

Sheva. Oh ! that is very kind ; he wou'd give you the preference when he had none himself.

Fred. Just so : but what acknowledgement shall I give you for these bills ?

Sheva. None, none ; I do acknowledge them myself with very great pleasures in serving you, and no small pains in parting from them. I pray you, make yourself and pretty wife comfortable with the monies, and I will comfort myself as well as I can without them.—Ah, poor Sheva ! when thou art beggar man, who will take pity of thee?—Well, well ! no matter—now I must take a little walk about my business—I pray you pardon my unpoliteness.

Fred. No apology : I am gone—Farewell, Sheva ! Thou a miser ! thou art a prince. [*Exit.*

Sheva. Jabal ! open the door.

JABAL enters.

Jabal. 'Tis done, Sir.

Sheva. How now, Sirrah ! You was listening at the key-hole.

Jabal. Not I, Sir ; I was only oiling the lock : You love to have your bolts slip easily.

Sheva. You are a jackanapes : I shall slip you out of my door by and bye. [*Exit SHEVA.*

JABAL.

JABAL.

You may slip me through the crack of it, if I stay much longer with you—But to be sure I did listen, that is the truth of it. Hip! Holloa! Mother Dorcas!

DORCAS enters.

Jabal. Oh! I am glad you are in the way. Lend me your one ear, and I'll tell you a secret.

Dorcas. Let us hear it, Jabal, I love a secret—Come on this side of me.

Jabal. That's true; your left ear—Well, do you hear me? I have made a discovery.

Dorcas. I have no objection to a discovery. Out with it!

Jabal. Mother Dorcas, I have discover'd that our old master is no more a miser than I am.

Dorcas. I told you so.

Jabal. So you did, but that's not all. I have found out besides that he is no Hebrew, no more a Jew than Julius Cæsar; for to my certain knowledge he gives away his money by handfuls to the consumers of hog's-flesh.

Dorcas. He is merciful to all mankind.

Jabal. Yes, and to all sheep and oxen, lambs and calves, for he will not suffer us to touch a morsel of their flesh. Now because he lives without food, that's no reason I shou'd starve for want of eating. Oh! Mother Dorcas, 'tis untold what terrible and abominable temptations I struggle with.

Dorcas. How are you tempted, child? Tell me what it is that moves you.

Jabal. Why 'tis the devil himself, in the shape of a Bologna sausage: Gracious! how my mouth did water, as I saw a string of them dangling

from the penthouse of an oilman's shop! The fellow wou'd have persuaded me they were made of ass's flesh—Oh! if I cou'd have believ'd him.

Dorcas. Oh! horrible! You must not touch the unclean beast.

Jabal. No, to be sure; our people have never tasted bacon since they came out of the land of *Ham*.

Dorcas. Jabal, Jabal, what an escape you have had!

Jabal. So had the sausages, for my teeth quiver'd to be at them.

Dorcas. Come, my good lad, thou shalt be recompens'd for thy self-denial: I have an egg for thee in the kitchen.

Jabal. I hope it is an ostrich's, for I am mortally sharp set—Oh, mother, I have a thought in my head—I will give old master warning, and seek my fortune elsewhere.

Dorcas. Where will you seek it?

Jabal. Where there is plenty of prog, be assur'd—I will go upon the stage and turn actor: there is a great many eating parts, and I hope to fill them all. I spent sixpence t'other night upon a farce, when there was a notable fine leg of lamb serv'd up before the audience. Oh how I did long to be the attorney! I won't say so many good things would have come out of my mouth, but a pretty many more wou'd have gone into it.

Dorcas. How you ramble, Sirrah! What megrims you have in your head!

Jabal. Emptiness breeds them. Mercy, how glad I should be to see it written down in my part—*Enter Jabal with a roast chicken!*

Dorcas. Come, come, homelier fare must content you. Let us light the lamp, and boil our egg

Jabal

A COMEDY.

25

Jabal. What ! is it between us ? One egg,
and two to eat it ?

Dorcas. Well, I care not if I spend sixpence
for a treat, so thou wilt be sociable and merry
when it is over.

Jabal. Agreed ! only give me good cheer for
my dinner, and we will have good humour for
the desert.

[*Exeunt.*

END OF ACT II.

ACT

ACT III.

SCENE, a Chamber.

FREDERIC and Mrs. RATCLIFFE.

FREDERIC.

CAN you forgive me? Has my lovely advocate sued out my pardon, and may I now invoke a blessing on my love and me?

Mrs. R. Heaven in its bounty blefs you both! May all good fortune follow you, all comforts light upon you, and love and happiness ever subsist between you!

Fred. Such piety can never pray in vain.—Where is Eliza?

Mrs. R. She does not know you are here: Shall I call her?

Fred. Not yet. I have a little sum, and you must be our banker: Charles is too proud to touch it: his spirit is of a pitch too high to stoop to worldly matters. We have been warm and cordial friends, how we may fare as brothers, Heaven only knows: I have some fears.

Mrs. R. Eliza is impressed with the same apprehensions; but if Sir Stephen acquiesces, all will be well: I hope this money is a token of his forgiveness.

Fred. 'Twill serve to set us out: I have provided lodgings more commodious; I hope you will permit Eliza to remove, and I make further suit that you will have the goodness to accompany her.

Mrs. R.

Mrs. R. Well ; but you do not answer to my question of the money.—Hav'n't you seen your father ?

Fred. I have seen him.

Mrs. R. And explain'd to him—— ?

Fred. I have.

Mrs. R. Well ! what says he ?

Fred. If he had said what you'd have done him honor, and given ease to my Eliza's mother, I should not have waited for your question : But nature must have time to work. I have only stirr'd the dregs.—May I now see Eliza ? There is a cloud on my heart also, which only her bright presence can dispel.

Mrs. R. Ah ! Sir, she can be only bright henceforward by reflection ; her sunshine must be caught from your's.—However, I will send her to you.

[*Exit.*

FREDERIC.

Oh ! that my father was now standing by me to behold her, and confess how irresistible she is !—

ELIZA enters.

Oh ! my soul's joy, my treasure, my Eliza !
[*Embracing her.*

Eliza. Frederic, what tidings ?

Fred. None but of love, encreasing with each moment, glowing with every beam that those soft eyes diffuse, and heighten'd into rapture by those charms, those graces, that each look, word, motion spread around you.

Eliza. These are fond flattering words ; but where's the consolation that you would have given me had you brought back a pardon from your father ? This ardor only proves that you had too much love, and I too little generosity.

Fred.

Fred. Take courage, Eliza! I have not lost the field, only prolonged the fight: I have but skirmish'd with him yet; he has not felt my strength. Let me set you in fight, and if there is a callous in his heart, (which I won't say there is) your eyes, my charmer, will refine and melt it.

Eliza. My eyes have injured him to much already.—Oh! you rash man, why did you take such pains to be undone? Why lull me into dreams of happiness, till I forgot that I was poor and wretched? Deceiver of yourself and me, I thought we trod on flowers, and never spied the precipice behind you.

Fred. I see no precipice; I fear none.

Eliza. Hear me, my Frederic, let love stand off a while, and give your ear to reason.—'Tis fit that you should know the heart, for which you have risk'd so much. Our marriage was a rash one; be that my witness how I lov'd you, for never till this day had I the recollection of one act, that weigh'd upon my conscience, or reproach'd me with the sin of disobedience in the slightest instance: But, though I wanted firmness to oppose your love, I am not void of courage to prevent your ruin.—Have patience! hear me out—Sir Stephen Bertram wish'd for money; I have none to give him, the fortune of my house is crush'd, the spirit yet survives, even in me, the weakest and perhaps the humblest of the name; but I resist contempt, and, if he spurns my poverty, I have a sure resource, that shall compel him to applaud my spirit.

Fred. What do you mean? Your looks, your language terrify me.

Eliza. Oh! I have lov'd you far too well to trifle. I will convince the world 'twas not by interest my heart was gain'd; 'twas not to keep off
want,

want, to live at ease, and make the noble relics of my family retainers of his charity, I married to Sir Stephen Bertram's son; it was with worthier, purer views, to share his thoughts, unite my heart to his, and make his happiness my own: These sentiments are my inheritance; if these will not suffice for his ambition, they will teach me how to act becoming of my birth, under the imputation of his son's seducer.

Fred. Hence with that word! It is a profanation to your lips. Was ever man so blest, so honour'd, so exalted as I am? If pride will not see it, if avarice cannot feel it, is that a reason why humility and gratitude shou'd not be blest in the enjoyment of it?

Mrs. RATCLIFFE enters.

Mrs. R. Eliza, your brother is come.

Eliza. Leave me, I beseech you, Frederic, leave me! Let me confer with him alone: There's no way else to pacify him.

Mrs. R. Come, let us yield to her request: I do believe she's right. [*Exit. Mrs. R. and FRED.*]

CHARLES enters.

Charles. Alone! how is my dear Eliza? You look pale, my love—Have you been out, or are you going out? Has any thing occur'd? You are more dress'd than usual.

Eliza. Am I? No, sure; you have seen this dress before. I have nothing new.

Ch. I can't say quite as much, for I have a new livelihood to seek: Sir Stephen has discarded me.

Eliza. Oh! fie upon him.

Ch. No, no! the man is worldly wise, no more. He has a son, Eliza, and he has found out I have a sister.

a sifter. Who can blame him? Beauty is a dangerous thing when honor does not guard it. But I know what my Eliza is, and therefore, to confute suspicion, and put this careful merchant at his ease, we will cut short the question, and retire from London.

Eliza. Where must we go?

Ch. Far enough off for his repose be sure. I am sorry on account of Frederic, for I love him; but he has been too frequent in his visits here, and he knows I think so. He will be happier for our parting.

Eliza. I doubt that—Is your resolution taken?

Ch. Irrevocable—Northward is my point—Where is my mother? I wou'd speak with her.

Eliza. Stay! Hear your sifter first.

Ch. What ails you? what is coming? Why do you tremble?

Eliza. Oh! Charles! [*Weeps, and hides her face.*]

Ch. What is it? Speak.

Eliza. I am the wife of Frederic.

Ch. Heaven and good angels forbid it!

Eliza. Heaven and good angels, as I hope, have witness'd it.

Ch. Rash girl, you have undone him; torn asunder nature's strongest tye, set father against son—When was the name of Ratcliffe dishonor'd until now?—I've done with you.

Eliza. Charles!—Brother!—Benefactor! Is there yet a name more tender, an appeal more sacred? Did hard fortune leave me only one protector, one dear friend, and will not he forgive me?—Take me then, and hurl me to the ground, as one not worth preserving.

[*Throws herself on his neck.*]

Ch. Wretched Eliza, did I ever till this moment meet your embrace with coldness? Have I not

not lov'd you, heaven and earth, how much !—
How then have I deserv'd to be dishonour'd by
you, and to have my name stamp'd as the joint
seducer of a fond weak youth, who will have
cause to execrate the hour when first he call'd
me friend ?

Eliza. Strike me not to the heart with your
reproaches, but in pity hear me: I am not lightly-
minded, not ignobly taught how to distinguish
honor, for I am your sister, and have a saint, that
does not blush to call me daughter: She has
pronounc'd my pardon.

Ch. She is all pity; sorrow has melted her
fond heart to weakness.

Eliza. And can you find no excuse for mine?
What have I known but sorrow, except gratitude
to you, and love to Frederic? Cannot you allow
for a fond sorrow-melted heart in me as well as
in my mother? You said but now that as a friend
you lov'd him: I love him as a friend; but wo-
man's friendship to your sex, when years, affec-
tions, sentiments so harmonize, as Frederic's with
mine, how long will it retain its station in two
hearts before it draws them closer, and unites
them as you see?

Ch. We'll have no more of this, Eliza. There
is a weakness lurking at my heart, that warns
me how I trust myself too far; you have made
wreck of your own honour, wretched girl; I may
still rescue mine. [*Exit.*]

FREDERIC and Mrs. RATCLIFFE enter.

Mrs. RATCLIFFE.

Eliza!—my dear child! how has it pass'd?

Fred. It is too plain how it has pass'd—She is
in tears, pale and trembling—By my soul, it is
too much.

Eliza.

Eliza. Hush, hush ! be still.

Fred. She'll faint; by Heavens, she'll faint.—
Oh, monstrous cruelty ! Why did I leave her ?
Why did you persuade me ?

Eliza. Give me your arm—Lead me into the
other room : I shall recover there, if you will be
but patient. [Exeunt.

(Scene changes to Sir STEPHEN BERTRAM'S House.)

Sir STEPHEN BERTRAM and SAUNDERS.

Sir STEPHEN.

Well, Saunders, what news have you been
able to collect of my undutiful son ?

Saun. I have not seen Mr. Bertram, but I am
told he has settled himself in very handsome lodg-
ings, and is gone to remove his lady to them.

Sir S. His lady, do you call her ? Can you find
no fitter term ? Where shou'd he get the means
to settle ? He was not furnish'd with them by me ;
who else will do it ? If he attempts to raise money
upon expectancies, be it at their peril, who are
fools enough to trust him : No prudent man will
be his bubble.—If I were sure that was his prac-
tice, I shou'd hold it matter of conscience to ad-
vertise against his debts.

Saun. Perhaps there may be some persons in
the world, who think you will not always hold
out against an only son.

Sir S. Then let those persons smart for their
opinion : they little know the feelings of an in-
jur'd father ; they cannot calculate my hopes, my
disappointments, my regret. He might have had
a lady with an ample fortune : A wife without a
shilling is—but what avails complaint ? Cou'd
you learn nothing further who supplies him, who
holds him up ?

Saun.

Saun. I hear that he had money of your broker, Sheva.

Sir S. That must be false intelligence. He will as soon make gold by transmutation, as wring it from the gripe of that old usurer: No, no, Sheva is too wary, too much a Jew to help him with a shilling.

Saun. Yet I was so inform'd by his own servant Jabal. He says, Mr. Bertram came to old Sheva's house by appointment; that he overheard their whole conversation, in which your son very honorably stated the utter ruin your displeasure had brought upon him, and wou'd have refus'd the money, but that old Sheva forc'd it upon him.

Sir S. It mocks all belief; it only proves that Sheva, the most inveterate miser in existence, has a fellow Jew for his servant, one of the completest liars in creation.

Saun. I am apt to give him credit for the fact, notwithstanding.

Sir S. Then give me leave to say you have more faith than most men living: was I to give so much credit, Mr. Saunders, I shou'd soon stop.

Saun. I am not quite so fixt in my persuasion of old Sheva's character as you are. In his dealings, all the world knows he is punctiliously honest; no man's character stands higher in the Alley; and his servant tells me, though he starves himself, he is secretly very charitable to others.

Sir S. Yes, this you may believe, if you are disposed to take one Jew's word for another Jew's character: I am obstinate against both; and if he has supplied the money, as I am sure it must be on usurious principles, as soon as ever I have the old miser in my reach, I will wring either the truth from his lips, or the life out of his carcase.

D

SHEVA

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D

SHEVA

SHEVA enters.

Sheva. How does my worthy master? I am your very humble servant goot Sir Stephen Bertram. I have a little private business to impart to you with your goot leave, and if your leisure serves.

Sir S. Leave us, if you please.

[*Exit SAUNDERS.*

Sheva. Aha! I am very much fatigued: there is great throng and press in the offices at the bank, and I am aged and feeble.

Sir S. Hold, Sir;—Before I welcome you within these doors, or suffer you to sit down in my presence, I demand to know explicitly, and without prevarication, if you have furnish'd my son with money secretly, and without my leave?

Sheva. If I do lend, ought I not to lend it in secret? If I do not ask your leave, Sir Stephen, may I not dispose of my own monies according to my own liking? But if it is a crime, I do wish to ask you who is my accuser? that, I believe, is justice every where, and in your happy country I do think it is law likewise.

Sir S. Very well, Sir, you shall have both law and justice. The information comes from your own servant Jabal. Can you controvert it?

Sheva. I do presume to say my servant ought not to report his master's secrets; but I will not say he has not spoken the truth.

Sir S. Then you confess the fact—

Sheva. I humbly think there is no call for that: you have the information from my foot-boy—I do not deny it.

Sir S. And the sum—

Sheva. I do not talk of the sum, Sir Stephen, that is not my practice; neither, under favor, is my foot-boy my cashier. If he be a knave, and
listen

listen at my key-hole, the more shame his ; I am not in the fault.

Sir S. Not in the fault ! Wretch, miser, usurer ! you never yet let loose a single guinea from your gripe, but with a view of doubling it at the return. I know you what you are.

Sheva. Indeed ! 'tis more than I will say of myself.—I pray you, goot Sir Stephen, take a little time to know my heart, before you rob me of my reputation. I am a Jew, a poor defenceless Jew ; that is enough to make me miser, usurer—Alas ! I cannot help it.

Sir S. No matter : you are caught in your own trap : I tell you now my son is ruin'd, disinherited, undone. One consolation is, that you have lost your money.

Sheva. If that be a consolation, you are very welcome to it. If my monies are lost, my motives are not.

Sir S. I'll never pay one farthing of his debts ; he has offended me for life ; refus'd a lady with ten thousand pounds, and married a poor miss without a doit.

Sheva. Yes, I do understand your son is married.

Sir S. Do you so ? By the same token I understand you to be a villain.

Sheva. Aha ! that is a very bad word—villain. I did never think to hear that word from one, who says he knows me. I pray you now permit me to speak to you a word or two in my own defence. I have done great deal of business for you, Sir Stephen ; have put a pretty deal of monies in your pocket by my pains and labors : I did never wrong you of one fixpence in my life : I was content with my lawful commission.—How can I be a villain ?

Sir S. Do you not uphold the son against the father?

Sheva. I do uphold the son, but not against the father; it is not natural to suppose the oppressor and the father one and the same person. I did see your son struck down to the ground with sorrow, cut to the heart: I did not stop to ask whose hand had laid him low; I gave him mine, and rais'd him up.

Sir S. You! you to talk of charity!

Sheva. I do not talk of it: I feel it.

Sir S. What claim have you to generosity, humanity, or any manly virtue? Which of your money-making tribe ever had sense of pity? Shew me the terms, on which you have lent this money, if you dare! Exhibit the dark deed, by which you have mesh'd your victim in the snares of usury; but be assur'd I'll drag you to the light, and publish your base dealings in the world.

[*Catches him by the sleeve.*]

Sheva. Take your hand from my coat—my coat and I are very old, and pretty well worn out together—There, there! be patient—moderate your passions and you shall see my terms: they are in little compass: fair dealings may be comprised in few words.

Sir S. If they are fair, produce them.

Sheva. Let me see, let me see!—Ah, poor Sheva!—I do so tremble, I can hardly hold my papers—So, so! Now I am right—Aha! here it is.

Sir S. Let me see it.

Sheva. Take it—Do you not see it now? Have you cast your eye over it? Is it not right? I am no more than broker, look you: If there is a mistake, point it out, and I will correct it.

Sir S. Ten thousand pounds invested in the
three

three per cents. money of Eliza, late Ratcliffe, now Bertram !

Sheva. Even so ! a pretty tolerable fortune for a poor disinherited son not worth one penny.

Sir S. I'm thunderstruck !

Sheva. Are you so ? I was struck too, but not by thunder. And what has Sheva done to be call'd villain ?—I am a Jew, what then ? Is that a reason none of my tribe shou'd have a sense of pity ? You have no great deal of pity yourself, but I do know many many noble British merchants that abound in pity, therefore I do not abuse your tribe.

Sir S. I am confounded and ashamed ; I see my fault, and most sincerely ask your pardon.

Sheva. Goot lack, goot lack ! that is too much. I pray you, goot Sir Stephen, say no more ; you'll bring the blush upon my cheek, if you demean yourself so far to a poor Jew, who is your very humble servant to command.

Sir S. Did my son know Miss Ratcliffe had this fortune ?

Sheva. When ladies are so handsome, and so goot, no generous man will ask about their fortune.

Sir S. 'Tis plain I was not that generous man.

Sheva. No no, you did ask about nothing else.

Sir S. But how, in the name of wonder, did she come by it ?

Sheva. If you did give me money to buy stock, wou'd you not be much offended were I to ask you how you came by it ?

Sir S. Her brother was my clerk. I did not think he had a shilling in the world.

Sheva. And yet you turn'd him upon the world, where he has found a great many shillings : The world, you see, was the better mai-

ter of the two. Well, Sir Stephen, I will humbly take my leave. You wish'd your son to marry a lady with ten thousand pounds, he has exactly fulfill'd your wishes; I do presume you will not think it necessary to turn him out of doors, and disinherit him for that.

Sir S. Go on, I merit your reproof. I shall henceforward be ashamed to look you or my son in the face.

Sheva. To look me in the face is to see nothing of my heart; to look upon your son, and not to love him, I should have thought had been impossible.—Sir Stephen, I am your very humble servant.

Sir S. Farewell, friend Sheva!—Can you forgive me?

Sheva. I can forgive my enemy; much more my friend.

END OF ACT III.

ACT

ACT IV.

SCENE, *A Chamber.**Sir* STEPHEN BERTRAM; SAUNDERS.*Sir* STEPHEN.

I AM wrong, Saunders, totally wrong in the manner I have resented my son's marriage.

Saun. I am happy to hear you say so. I flatter'd myself you wou'd not hold out long against a worthy son: It is not in the nature of a father to resent so deeply.

Sir S. Very true, Saunders, very true; my heart is not a hard one—but the lady he has married has ten thousand pounds for her fortune.

Saun. Oh! that indeed makes all the difference in life. This is a mollifying circumstance, I confess.

Sir S. I know not how she came by it. It seems to be the work of magic; but so it surely is; I saw the stock in Sheva's hands.

Saun. Well, Sir, you cou'd not have it from better hands than from the author himself.

Sir S. How! What, from Sheva! Impossible! Ratcliffe is of a great family—Some sudden wind-fall, some relation dead. You'll see him in mourning next time you meet.

Saun. He has not put it on yet, for I left him this minute in the counting-house: he is waiting to speak with you.

Sir S. So, so, so! Now then the news will come out—But pr'ythee don't let the gentleman

D 4

wait.

wait. We must make up for past slights by double civility. Pray inform Mr. Ratcliffe I shall be most happy to receive his commands.

Sann. O money, money! What a qualifier thou art! [Exit.

Sir STEPHEN.

Now I shall be curious to see how this young man will carry himself in prosperity. Had I but stayed one day longer without discharging him, I cou'd have met him with a better face.

CHARLES RATCLIFFE enters.

Ch. Sir Stephen Bertram, I shall not engross much of your time. My business will be dispatched in a very few words.

Sir S. Whatever commands you may have for me, Mr. Ratcliffe, I am perfectly at your service.

Ch. I don't doubt it, Sir, but I shall not put your spirit to any great trial. My explanation will not be a hostile one, unless you chuse to understand it as such.

Sir S. Far be it from me to wish it: Good terms between near connections, you know, Sir, should always be cultivated.

Ch. You are pleas'd to be facetious, but your irony will not put me by from telling you that your son's connection with my family is no match of my making. If my sister has dishonour'd herself, it behoves me to say, and to say it on my solemn word, that the whole transaction was kept perfectly secret from me, and has receiv'd every mark of my displeasure and resentment, that I have as yet had an opportunity to give it.

Sir S. Proud as Lucifer himself! [*aside.*]—Well, Sir, if you are dissatisfied with the match, I can only say I am not in the fault of it: but when you say your sister is dishonour'd, I protest
I do

I do not perfectly understand you ; nor did I quite expect such an expression from you.

Ch. Probably you did not ; your studies perhaps have laid more in the book of accompts than in the book of honor.

Sir S. You are very high, Sir : I am afraid your unexpected good fortune has rather intoxicated you.

Ch. No, Sir ; the best good fortune I have known this day, was that which discharg'd me from your connection, not this which unwillingly imposes it upon me.

Sir S. Very well, Mr. Ratcliffe ! It was not with this sort of conversation I was prepar'd to entertain you ; the sooner we put an end to it the better : Only this I must take leave to tell you, that the fortune of the family, into which your sister has married, is by no means overbalanc'd by the fortune she has brought into it.

Ch. Aye, now your heart's come out : that mercenary taunt is all you have to say. But had my wish prevail'd, you never should have had it in your power to utter Ratcliffe's name without a blush for your unwarranted suspicion of his honour. [Exit.

Sir STEPHEN.

He's mad ; his head is turn'd : Prosperity has overset him. If the sister of the same blood is provided with no better brains, poor Frederic has made a precious bargain. We shall breed candidates for Bedlam. [Exit.

SHEVA's House.

SHEVA alone.

Aha ! very goot, very goot ! I am at home. Now I will sit down in my own parlour, and not ask

ask leave of any body—I did not think I cou'd have given so large a sum away, and yet outliv'd it, but I am pretty well—There is but one man in the world poorer than he was, and he is going out of it; and there is a couple at least a great deal happier, and they are coming into it. Well, well! that is two for one, cent. per cent. so I have made pretty goot bargain.—Now I will ring my bell and order my dinner: Yes, yes, I will eat my dinner, for I am hungry. [*Rings.*]

JABAL enters.

Sheva. Oh! you knave! Oh you picklock! how dare you listen at my door and hear my secrets? firrah, I will have your ears nail'd to it.—Don't you speak, don't you speak: you will make me angry, and that will spoil my appetite.—What have you got in the house for my repast?

Jabal. Plenty, as good luck will have it.

Sheva. Plenty, say you? What is it? Let me hear.

Jabal. One egg-shell, and the skins of three potatoes: shall I serve them up at once, or make two courses of them?

Sheva. How now, you jack-an-apes! One egg-shell is nothing goot for a hungry man. Have you left some of the potatoes in the skins?

Jabal. Not an atom; you may have the broth they were boil'd in.

Sheva. You are a saucy knave to make a joke of your master. Do you think I will keep a jack-pudding in my house like you, to listen at my key-hole, and betray my conversation? Why did you say I gave away my monies.

Jabal. What harm did I do? Nobody believ'd me.

Sheva. Go your ways, go your ways; you are not

not for my purpose, you are not fit to be trusted; you do let your idle tongue run away with you.

Jabal. That is because you won't employ my teeth.

Sheva. You do prate too much; you do chatter, and bring your poor master into great straits; I have been much mal-treated and abus'd.

Jabal. Have you so? I wish to goodness I had been by.

Sheva. Sirrah! you wish you had been by, to hear your master abus'd?

Jabal. Yes, for I would have dealt the fellow that abus'd you such a recompence in the fifth button, that my friend Mendoza should not have plac'd it better.—Damn it! do you think I wou'd stand by and hear my master abus'd?

Sheva. Don't you swear, don't you swear—That is goot lad, but don't you swear.

Jabal. No, by the living! tho' I may be starv'd in your service, I will die in your defence.

Sheva. Well, well, you are a merry knave—but my eyes do water a little; the air is sharp, and they are weak. Go your ways, go your ways—Send Dorcas to me. [Exit *Jabal*.]

I cannot tell what ails my heart all this day long, it is so troublesome. I have spent ten thousand pounds to make it quiet, but there must be a little fraction more—I must give the poor knave something for his good will—Oh dear, oh dear! What will become of me?

DORCAS enters.

Sheva. So, so! Come hither, Dorcas. Why do you look sad? What ails you, girl? Why do you cry?

Dorcas. Because you are going to turn away *Jabal*: He is the kindest, willingest, good natur'dest

tur'dest soul alive—The house will be a dungeon without Jabal.

Sheva. Then tell him 'tis at your request I let him stay in his dungeon. Say, that I was very angry with him, but that you pacified my anger.

Dorcas. Lord love your heart ! that is so like you.

Sheva. Hark you, Dorcas, I will give you this piece of money to make the poor knave merry ! but mind that you bestow it on him as your own little present, and promise not to say it comes from me.

Dorcas. Well ! to be sure you do not give your money like other people. If ever I do a good turn I take care the person I favor shou'd know from whence it comes, that so he may have the pleasure of returning it.

Sheva. Well, Dorcas, you take your course, and I take mine—Now I will go and beg a bit of dinner of a friend. You are very goot housewife, Dorcas ; you do keep an empty kitchen and a clean cupboard.

Dorcas. And whose fault is that ? How many people are feasting abroad at your cost, whilst you have a famine at home ? But here comes your friend and neighbour, Mrs. Goodison ; she will take care of you. [Exit.

Mrs. GOODISON enters.

Mrs. Good. Ah ! my good Sir, I perceive you are at your old sport ; no smoke in your chimney, no cloth upon your table, full coffers and an empty cupboard.

Sheva. No, no, my coffers are not full, I am very poor just now.

Mrs. Good. Come then, and partake with one, whom your bounty has made rich.

Sheva.

Sheva. Do not talk of my bounty; I do never give away for bounty's sake; if pity wrings it from my heart, whether I will or not, then I do give: How can I help it?

Mrs. Good. Well, Sir, I can be silent, but I cannot forget—And now if you will come and share my grateful meal, perhaps I can shew you one of the loveliest objects in creation, a beautiful and amiable young bride, who with her husband and mother is now my lodger. She was married this very morning to your friend Sir Stephen Bertram's son, who, between you and me, has brought himself into sad trouble with his father by the match. But surely if there is a woman upon earth worth a man's being ruin'd for, it must be this young creature—So modest, so sweet-temper'd, so engaging—Oh! that Sir Stephen had your heart!—

Sheva. It might be inconvenient to him, if he had: It is not kept for nothing, I assure you.

Mrs. Good. You wou'd not turn such a daughter-in-law from your doors—

Sheva. Nor will he, perhaps.

Mrs. Good. Ah! Sir, I will know a little better: This poor young gentleman himself told me he was ruin'd: "But don't be afraid to take me into your house," added he, with a sigh that went to my heart, "I am provided with the means of doing justice to you by a generous friend," shewing me a bank bill of one hundred pounds—Heaven bless the generous friend! quoth I—and at that moment I thought of you, my good Mr. Sheva, who rescued me from the like distress, when my poor husband died.

Sheva. You may think of me, Mrs. Goodison; but I beg you will not speak of me in the hearing of your lodgers.

Mrs. Good.

Mrs. Good. Well, well, Sir, if I must not speak, I must not; yet a strange thing came out in conversation with the mother of the bride, a very excellent lady, from whom I found out that she is the widow of that very gentleman we knew at Cadiz by the name of Don Carlos only, and to whom I believe you think yourself under some obligations in your escape from that country.

Sheva. Mercies upon his heart! he was the preserver of my life! but for his charitable succour, this poor body wou'd have fed the fires of an *Auto da fé*. Is it possible Mrs. Ratcliffe is the widow of my benefactor?

Mrs. Good. Most certain that she is, which you may soon be convince'd of; but I perceive you know the lady's name.

Sheva. Did you not name the lady yourself?

Mrs. Good. No, on my word. Ah! Sir, you are fairly caught; you have betray'd yourself: Ill deeds, they say, will come to light, and so will good ones, it shou'd seem.

Sheva. Hold your tongue, hold your tongue; you forget that I am fasting and without a dinner; go your ways, and I will follow: You are nimble, I am slow; you will be sham'd with your lodgers, if they see you with a poor old Jew like me.

Mrs. Good. Ah! You are cunning in your charities; but I'll do as you wou'd have me, and be ready at the door to receive and welcome you.

[*Exit.*]

SHEVA alone.

—The widow of my preserver from the inquisitors of Cadiz, and the mother of my rescuer from the mob of London!—Dear me, dear me! How Providence disposes all things!—The friend that's dead wants nothing; the friend that is
alive

alive shall likewise want nothing that I can give him; for I will die quickly my own self, and give him all. Goot lack! goot lack! when I did heap up monies with such pains and labor, I did always think that I should find an use for them at last.

[*Exit.*]

SCENE *changes.*

Mrs. RATCLIFFE, ELIZA, and CHARLES.

Ch. I have cleared myself to his father, and I'll clear myself to all the world. No man shall say I lay traps for heirs.

Mrs. R. Charles, Charles, you soar too high.

Ch. Madam, Madam, you stoop too low.

Mrs. R. How is your honor slighted, when your friend did not consult even his father?

Ch. He knew his father's mind too well.

Mrs. R. And what wou'd you have done?

Ch. I wou'd have sav'd my friend.

Eliza. And sacrific'd your sister—That, let me say, is a high strain of friendship, but no great proof of brotherly affection.

Ch. Sister, there is more peace of mind sacrific'd by indulging in an act to be repented of, than by foregoing a dishonorable propensity. The woman without fortune, that consents to a clandestine marriage with a man, whose whole dependence is upon an unforgiving father, never can be justified.

Eliza. You argue from the unforgiving nature of Sir Stephen Bertram: You had experience of it, I had none.

Ch. You might have had, by an appeal to his consent, before you gave your own.

Mrs. R. You bear too hard upon your sister. You forget her sex, her situation, your own tenderness, and the affection you have ever borne her.

Ch. No, Madam, if I cou'd forget how proudly
I have

I have thought of her, I shou'd not be so humbled by her conduct as I am. I own I stand in amaze at your indifference. You think I am too sensitive, too proud; you tell me that I soar too high. How was it when I was this Bertram's clerk? I bore my lot with patience, I submitted without murmuring to poverty: I cannot brook disgrace.

Eliza. Well, Charles, if you cou'd love me only whilst you thought me faultless, I must wonder how it was that we were friends so long: And now you have said all that rigid justice can enforce against me: had you said less, I shou'd have felt it more.

FREDERIC enters.

Fred. Charles—Brother—Friend!—Will you not give me joy? Come, man, shake off this cloud, and smile upon my happiness; we catch it but by gleams.

Ch. Yes, Sir, we sometimes catch it by surprise and stealth; we catch it by a breach of promise and good faith—Then to congratulate a man on such a catch, in my sense of the word, would be to libel him.

Fred. I have frequently seen cause to applaud your philosophy, Charles: Now I must think you carry it too far.

Ch. It touches you too near, therefore you like it not.

Fred. To that remark I shou'd return an answer, were not these dear pledges present, that might a little ruffle your philosophy perhaps, but it wou'd fully vindicate my principle.

Ch. Postpone it then, but don't forget it.

Fred. When friends fall into altercation on such points as these, there shou'd be none to witness to their folly.

Ch. Folly!—

Mrs.

Mrs. R. Son, son, no more of this.

Eliza. Stop, I conjure you both!—Charles, Charles, if you have love or pity left, let this diffension go no further.—And you, Frederic—Husband!—You whose generous heart has put to hazard every hope for me, add yet another proof of love, by suffering these rebukes with patience: They are but flashes of a temper, warm in friendship, glowing with honor, impatient of neglect. Perhaps my brother thinks ambition, meanness, artifice, might have some part, some influence, in moving me to what I've done.—I spurn such motives, disavow them all—Were I in Frederic's place, and he in mine, I shou'd have done as he did! I shou'd have thought no sacrifice too great to have secur'd a lasting interest in a heart like his.

Ch. This had been only ruin to yourself, and wou'd have had the plea of spirit, therefore more excuseable: but this no man of honor wou'd have suffer'd! therefore 'tis only said, not done.

Fred. Whatever my Eliza says is done; her actions verify her words, and he that doubts them wou'd dispute against the light of Heaven. 'Tis I that am advanc'd, she is abas'd; 'tis I that am enrich'd, Eliza is impoverish'd: I only risque a few sharp words from an ungentle father, she suffers keen reproaches undeserv'd from an injurious brother.

Ch. Urge me no further—I can bear no more.

Eliza. Oh! my dear mother, save me!

[Falls into her arms.

Fred. There, there! You've struck her to the heart—and that's a coward's blow—

[Apart to CHARLES, in an under voice.

My life, my soul, look up! Dear Madam, take her hence. [Mrs. RATCLIFFE takes ELIZA out.

Ch. A coward's blow!—you recollect those words, and know their meaning, I suppose—

E

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[*Apart to CHARLES, in an under voice.*]

My life, my soul, look up! Dear Madam, take her hence. [*Mrs. RATCLIFFE takes ELIZA out.*]

Ch. A coward's blow!—you recollect those words, and know their meaning, I suppose—

E

Fred.

Fred. Yes, and will meet your comment when you will and where you will.

Ch. Then follow me, and we'll adjust that matter speedily.

Fred. I will but drop a tear upon the ruin you have made, and then be with you.

Ch. I'll wait for you below. [Exit.

ELIZA enters hastily.

Eliza. Where are you both, rash men? Ah, Frederic! Alone!—What is become of Charles? Why is he gone away? What have you said to him? I did not hear it? I was lost in terror—I am sure you have quarrell'd.

Fred. No, no, not quarrell'd—only jarr'd, as friends will sometimes do—all will be set to rights.

Eliza. How? When? Why not this moment, in my hearing? I shall be happy to make peace between you.

Fred. Peace will be made, assure yourself, sweet love: These little heats are easily adjusted.

Eliza. But I cou'd do it best; you are too hot, both, both too hot and fiery.

Fred. We shall be cooler soon: such heats soon spend themselves, and then the heart is laid to rest.

Eliza. Heaven grant such rest to your's!

Fred. Indeed!

Eliza. What says my Frederic? You are still discompos'd. Your colour comes and goes—Oh! that my arms cou'd give you rest!—Nay, what now, my Frederic! You struggle to get loose—Are these soft toils uneasy to you? Will not your proud swelling heart endure such gentle fond imprisonment.

Fred. Oh! thou angelic virtue, soul-dissolving softness, wou'd I might thus expire enfolded in these arms! Love, I conjure thee to bear up! I am sure my father will take pity and be kind to thee: I shall assail his feelings in a manner that

no parent can resist. I am going now to put it to the proof.—Farewell !

Eliza. Why in such haste ?—Stay yet a little while—If you depart so soon, you'll meet with Charles again, and then—

Fred. What then ?

Eliza. Some fatal accident will be the issue of it. Alas ! You know not what his passions are when once inflamed ; let them burn out, and then he's as calm as water.

Fred. Where does this tend ? You wou'd not make a coward of your husband ?

Eliza. No, nor wou'd you make a distracted wretch of your poor Eliza : therefore I will not let you loose till you have promis'd me not to provoke him to more violence : Promise me this and you shall go.

Fred. Well then, if that will set your mind at rest, I promise you I'll have no further altercation with him, not another word to gall him.

Eliza. You'll not renew your quarrel ?—

Fred. No, my Eliza, we will end it, and dismiss it.

Eliza. And this you promise on your honor—

Fred. Yes, I do promise.

Eliza. Then all my fears are over—Now you may go—Well ! What withholds you ? What more do you wish than freedom and release from my fond arms ?

Fred. To snatch one last dear moment, and then die within them—Oh ! my soul's better part, may Heaven preserve and bless you ! *[Exit.*

ELIZA.

Now I am happy, now I am secure : this breach once heal'd, I can face all alarms.

END OF ACT IV.

ACT

ACT V.

SCENE, a Tavern.

FREDERIC, attended by a Waiter.

FREDERIC.

IS the porter return'd, who went with my message to Mr. Saunders, at Sir Stephen Bertram's?

Wait. He is, Sir; the gentleman will be with you presently.

Fred. Shew him up as soon as he comes—There will be another gentleman call; I believe you know Mr. Ratcliffe?

Wait. Yes, we know Mr. Ratcliffe very well.

Fred. If he comes whilst Mr. Saunders is with me, request him to wait a few minutes till he is gone.

Wait. I shall, Sir—Any other commands?

Fred. None.

[*Exit Waiter.*]

I scarce know what I've written to my father; yet perhaps these few unstudied lines, dictated in such a moment, may dispose him to protect the widow, if fate will have it so, of a discarded son.—Now I am ready for this angry champion; and since he is resolv'd to vindicate his courage by his sword, let him produce his weapons when he will, I'll not refuse the satisfaction he demands.

JABAL runs in hastily.

Jabal. Oh, Sir, Sir! I'm overjoy'd to find you—Come, I pray you, come away to my old master, who is pining till he sees you.

Fred. Who is your master, and who are you?

Jabal. As if you did not know Jabal, who lives—No, hold there, who does not live, but starves with your old friend in Duke's Place. Why, lud-a-

lud-a-mery, I knew your honor at the length of the street, and saw you turn into this tavern: the puppyly waiter wou'd have stopt me from coming up to you.

Fred. I wish you had taken his advice.

Jabal. That wou'd not be your wish if you knew all. Sure enough I must hunt up Mr. Ratcliffe also; for there is an iron in the fire for each of you: Master is making his will—Lawyer Dash is at his elbow.

Fred. If the devil was at his elbow, I cannot come to him.

Jabal. Oh! the living! I wou'd not carry such a message back for all the world—Why, when Lawyer Dash has pen and ink in hand, and a will under his thumb, he'll dash you in or dash you out in a crack.

Fred. Then temper the apology to your taste, only let your master understand I cannot come.

Jabal. I'll tell him then you are married—That will be a silencer at once. [*Exit JABAL.*]

Fred. Begone! Make haste!—Married! How cutting is that recollection! Joys just in sight, shewn only to be snatcht away. Dear, lost, undone Eliza!—But I won't think, for that is madness—Inexorable honor must be obey'd.

Mr. SAUNDERS enters.

Saun. Mr. Bertram, I came to you the first moment I cou'd get away; for I long'd to give you joy.

Fred. Joy! name it not.

Saun. Well, if your joy was somewhat damp'd at first, you may now take it without any drawback.

Fred. I know not what you mean, nor do I wish to enquire: be silent on that subject, I conjure you. The favor I have to ask you is simply

this—Here is a letter for my father ; deliver it to him with your own hands—You seem surpriz'd.

Saun. I am indeed—the impatience of your looks—the hurry of your speech—the place in which I meet you—

Fred. The letter will explain all that—I cou'd not give it you in preface of my—Well, no matter—I take you for a man of honor and my friend. Will you give the letter ?

Saun. Assuredly ; but if I am a man of honor and your friend, why will you not let me stay with you ? In truth, dear Frederic, I am a friend, that if you want him will not flinch.

Fred. The friend I want, is one that will not force his services upon me when I can't accept of them ; but take my word at once, and leave me.

Saun. Enough ! I am gone. [Exit.

FREDERIC.

I have been harsh with that good man, but this suspense is terrible.

Waiter enters.

Waiter. Mr. Ratcliffe desires to know if you are at leisure.

Fred. Perfectly—Let him know I'm at his service. [Exit Waiter.

CHARLES RATCLIFFE enters.

Ch. I have brought my sword ; compare it with your own, and if you have a preference, make your choice. I presume you have no objection to the weapon.

Fred. None on my own account ; a little perhaps on the score of vanity, as thinking I have some advantage over you in point of skill and practice.

Ch. As far as that opinion goes, you're welcome to all the advantages it gives you. Oh ! Sir, this is a sorry business—Will nothing else convince

convince you I am incapable of giving a coward's blow?

Fred. You have offered nothing else: it is a mode of your own chusing.

Ch. Your language forc'd it on me: you have touch'd my feelings to the quick. Words, such as you made use of, cannot be pass'd over without absolute disgrace, unless you will revoke them by apology.

Fred. You may well conceive, Mr. Ratcliffe, with what repugnance I oppose myself to you on this occasion. Whether the event be fatal to you or to myself, small consolation will be left for the survivor. The course you take is warranted by every rule of honor, and you act no otherwise than as I expected: but as my expression justifies your challenge, so did your provocation justify my expression; and your language being addressed to a lady, whom I have the honor to protect, it is not in my power to retract one tittle of what I said; for, was you to repeat the same insult, I should follow it with the same retort.

Ch. If you hold to the words, I know not how we can adjust it amicably.

Fred. There is a way: you must find it out.

Ch. Suppose, then, that my language had been addressed to any other person than Eliza, wou'd you in that case have apologiz'd for your expression?

Fred. I will speak plainly to you, and the rather as I am now perhaps speaking to you for the last time.—Admitted by your sister's favour into a family, whose representative resents her conduct, I will not so disgrace her choice in your eyes, who have oppos'd it, as to submit in the first instance to the most distant hint at an apology.

Ch. I understand you now—You would have it spring from me—Impossible!

Fred. Then no more is to be said.

Ch. No more—defend yourself. (*They fight.*)

Fred. What's that? I've wounded you.

Ch. No.

Fred. Yes; I'm sure of it. 'Tis in your arm; you cannot poise your sword.

[*CHARLES drops his sword.*]

Ch. It is too true: your point has hit me thro' the guard: I'm at your mercy.

Fred. I am at your's, dear Charles, for pardon and forgiveness: now I retract my words, and blush for having used them—Let me bind up your wrist; here is a handkerchief—Shall I call for assistance?

Ch. No, no; a scratch; 'tis nothing. It scarce bleeds—Hark! somebody is at the door—Take up the swords.

Sheva (from without).—Let me in; I pray you, Gentlemen, let me in. I am Sheva, your friend.

Ch. Open the door, Frederic.

SHEVA enters.

Sheva. Dear me! dear me! what have you been about? Do you come into a public tavern, and lock yourselves up to be private?

Ch. Perhaps we did not wish the world to know the silly business we have been engag'd in.

Sheva. Gootness defend me! is it come to this? Have I been studying how to make you happy, whilst you were striving how to make me wretched? What a strange world is this! Are you not friends? Are you not brothers? Is that a reason you shou'd quarrel? And if you differ, must you fight? Can your swords argue better than their masters? You call that an affair of honor, I suppose; under your favor I do not think it a very honorable affair; 'tis only giving a fine name to a foul deed.

Fred.

Fred. Custom has gloss'd it over, and we are slaves to custom.

Sheva. Ask your pardon; I am only a poor Jew, a stranger in your country, and have not yet been taught to reverence all your customs. Goot lack, goot lack! what is the matter with your wrist?

Ch. Nothing to signify; a trifling scratch.

Sheva. A scratch you call it; that is a wound in common language: I pray you come to my poor house, and let that scratch be heal'd; you had great care for me, let me have some for you: that is my sense of an affair of honor; to pay the debt that I do owe to you, and to your father, who preserv'd my life in Spain, that is my point of honor.—Come, come, let us depart: this is no place to talk in; take up your swords, I hope we have no further use for them. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE changes.

Sir STEPHEN BERTRAM and Mrs. GOODISON.

Mrs. Good. Your son is not at home, Sir Stephen, but Mrs. Bertram is; and if you will allow me to call her down, I'm sure she will be happy to pay her duty to you.

Sir S. A moment's patience, Mrs. Goodison.—You seem much interested for this young bride, your lodger.

Mrs. Good. It is impossible to be otherwise. She has beauty to engage the eye, and manners to interest the heart.

Sir S. Some pride of family about her, I should guess; a little of her brother's vivacity perhaps.

Mrs. Good. None that appears: mildness and modesty, and every gentle grace, seem inherently her own.

Sir S. Be pleas'd to tell her I attend to pay my compliments; and as young ladies' characters are
not

not so easily develop'd in the company of their mothers, I shou'd be glad she wou'd allow me to confer with her alone. [*Exit Mrs. Good.*

Now I shall have this mystery unravell'd. Saunders's notion, that the fortune comes from Sheva, is romantic in the extreme. Why shou'd he portion her? She has no Jew's blood in her veins we'll hope; and as to a deception, that he dare not practise—She comes!—By heavens! a lovely creature.

ELIZA enters.

Eliza. You honor me most highly, Sir—

Sir S. Not so, Madam, the honor is conferr'd on me.

Eliza. How have I merited this condescension?

Sir S. Call it not condescension: it is no more than is due from one, who is proud to embrace the title you have allow'd him to assume.

Eliza. This is beyond my hopes. Will you permit me then to call myself your daughter, and entreat a blessing and a pardon on my knees?

Sir S. Not for the world in that submissive posture. All you can ask is granted with acknowledgments on my part for the happiness you have bestowed upon my son—Had certain circumstances occur'd before your marriage, that have since turn'd up, I presume you wou'd not have precipitated matters, at least not in the secret manner they were carried.

Eliza. What circumstances, Sir, may you allude to?

Sir S. The death, as I suppose, in your family—

Eliza. Good Heaven forbid! What death? My brother—

Sir S. No; your brother, Madam, no! Pray be not thus alarm'd!—I know your brother's circumstances

circumstances too well to suppose your sudden fortune cou'd proceed from him—Perhaps some distant relation, or some friend, may have bequeath'd—

Eliza. What? let me ask. I know of no bequest.

Sir S. Call it a gift then, a donation on your marriage—It must have been an agreeable surprise to my son to have been presented with a fortune so unexpected.

Eliza. I am loth to think Sir Stephen Bertram can descend to ridicule my poverty: that I shou'd be regarded by you as an unwelcome intruder upon your family I can well believe: that you wou'd point your whole resentment against me alone, and spare your son, is all that I dare wish at present: my future hope aspires no higher than by perseverance in my duty as a wife to merit your opinion, so as in time you may acknowledge me as your daughter. Conscious that I have incurr'd your displeasure, I shall patiently endeavour to soften it by submission and obedience.

Sir S. Madam, that answer is at once so pacifying and so candid, that if the information I have had of your being possess'd of ten thousand pounds for your fortune, be false, tho' I thought I had pretty strong evidence of it—

Eliza. Impossible!—I'm sure your son, I'm sure my brother never told you this.

Sir S. I cannot say they did.

Eliza. No, I'll engage for them they wou'd disdain so gross and palpable a deceit.

Sir S. Well, be as it may, with or without a fortune, portion'd or pennyless, I feel myself so irresistibly impell'd to open my arms to you as a father, that whether Sheva has or has not deceiv'd me, I here deposit my resentment, and by what I experience

experience of your power over my heart, most thoroughly acquit my son for having surrendered his.

Eliza. It is the impulse of your own generosity, not any impresson of my giving, that moves your heart to pity and forgiveness.—But who is Sheva, that you seem to point at as the author of this falsehood?

Sir S. Sheva the Jew—Surely you know the man.

Eliza. Thank Heaven I do not: I can safely say, I never to my recollection heard his name before. Some vile impostor, I suppose.

Sir S. Not quite that, tho' bad enough to be so treated, if he has practis'd this deceit on me. Sheva is my broker, your husband knows him well, a miserly methodical old Alley drudge, who shew'd me what I believ'd a true receipt for ten thousand pounds vested in your name in the funds—One of my people would have persuaded me it was his own voluntary benefaction—but if you don't know him, never saw him, never heard his name, the thing's impossible.

Eliza. Totally so, without one ray of probability: the man is either mad or mischievous: no Jew of that or any other name do I know; nay, I question if I ever exchange'd a word with any one of the nation in my life.

Sir S. Your merit then, and not your fortune, shall endear you to me. I will strike out ten thousand pounds, that I perceive you are not possessed of, and write in ten thousand graces, which I perceive you are possess'd of, and so balance the account.—Now, Saunders, what's the matter?

SAUNDERS enters.

Saun. Your son requested me to give this letter into your hands.

Sir S.

Sir S. No, no—there needs no letter—Tell him it is done; say that you found me conquer'd in less time than he was. Bid him make haste hither in person before I run away with his wife; and let him write no more letters, for I won't read a word of them. [*Exit SAUNDERS.*]

Eliza. Won't you be pleas'd to open your letter?

Sir S. Positively I will not read it, because Frederic shall not have to say that his rhetoric had any share in making me a convert. If it is, as I suppose, a recital of your graces and good qualities, I do not want his description to assist my sense of what I see; but if you have a wish to see your own fair person painted by his hand, you are welcome to indulge it—Break the seal—

Eliza. 'Tis short—I'll read it to you—"I am "this instant summoned by Charles Ratcliffe on a "point of honor, sword to sword."—Oh, Heavens!—I can no more—(*Drops the letter.*)

Sir S. What is it? what alarms you?

Eliza. Oh! that letter, that letter!—My husband and my brother—or one or both have fallen,

Sir S. Merciful Powers forbid it!

[*Takes up the letter.*]

Eliza. Stop not to read it; fly, and take me with you, plant me between them: I am the cause of quarrel; let the sword, that aims to pierce a heart dearer than my own, lodge in my guilty bosom.

Sir S. Oh, horrible to thought!—Hark, who is coming?

Eliza. The messenger of death—Let him not speak; his very look will kill me.

FREDERIC, followed by CHARLES.

Fred. My love, my life, my ever dear Eliza!—

Eliza. Where is your wound? Are you not dying? What is become of Charles?

Ch.

Ch. Here is your happy brother : all is well.

Fred. We are both here, with friendly hearts and joyful news to greet you.

Eliza. Don't speak of joy too soon : 'twill overthrow my senses—Let me survey you both. Don't deceive me ; you have wounds about you—Ah ! Charles, what's this ?

Ch. The least, but luckiest wound that ever man receiv'd : this little glance of your brave husband's sword disarm'd me of my weapon, and both our rash hearts of their anger. Now lay aside your fears, and prepare yourselves for wonders.

Fred. Oh ! Sir, I have offended you ; but—

Sir S. But what ? You have an advocate, that makes all hearts her own. Spare your appeal ; you will but waste your words.

Ch. Here comes my mother : bear up, Eliza ; say not a word of what has pass'd.

Mrs. RATCLIFFE enters.

Eliza. Oh ! my dear Madam, I have joy to give you—Let me present you to my Frederic's father.

Sir S. Yes, Madam ; and the greatest joy that son ever conferr'd upon me is the title he has given me to claim a father's share with you in this angel of a daughter.

Mrs. R. Such she has been to me. I am blest to hear you say that you approve her.

Sir S. Frederic, give me your hand—If you had brought me half the Indies with a wife, I shou'd not have join'd your hand to her's with such sincere delight.

Fred. How generous is that declaration !—Now, Charles, 'tis time to introduce our friend.

[CHARLES goes out.]

Mrs. R. What does he mean, Eliza ?

Eliza.

Eliza. I know no more than you: Some new wonder, I suppose.

Sir S. Hah! Sheva here? This is indeed a wonder.

CHARLES enters with SHEVA.

Ch. This is the man—My benefactor; your's Eliza; Frederic's; your's; dear mother! all mankind's: The widow's friend, the orphan's father, the poor man's protector, the universal philanthropist.

Sheva. Hush, hush! you make me hide my face.

[*Covers his face with his hands.*]

Ch. Ah! Sir, 'tis now too late to cover your good deeds: You have long mask'd your charities beneath this humble seeming, and shrunk back from actions princes might have gloried in: You must now face the world, and transfer the blush from your own cheeks to their's, whom prejudice had taught to scorn you. For your single fake we must reform our hearts, and inspire them with candor towards your whole nation.

Sheva. Enough, enough! more than enough—I pray you spare me: I am not us'd to hear the voice of praise, and it oppresses me: I shou'd not know myself, if you were to describe me; I have a register within, in which these merits are not noted. Simply I am an honest man, no more; fair in my dealings, as my good patron here, I hope, can witness.—That lady, I believe, is Mrs. Ratcliffe: She does not know me: I will not touch upon a melancholy subject, else I cou'd tell a story—Merciful Heaven! what horrors was I snatch'd from by her husband, now, alas! no more.

Mrs. R. Oh, gracious Powers!—The Jew of Cadiz—

Sheva. The very same—your debtor in no less

less a sum than all I possess, the earnings of a life preserv'd first by your husband, and now again by your son. Why am I prais'd then, if I am merely honest, and discharge my debts?

Sir S. Ah! now the mystery's solv'd. The ten thousand pounds were your's—Give them to Ratchiffe; I will have nothing from fortune, where nature gives so much.

Sheva. That is a noble speech—but monies does not lessen merit, at least not always, as I hope, for Mr. Ratchiffe's sake; for he is heir of all that I possess.

Mrs. R. What can I say? My heart's too full for utterance. O Charles, the fortunes of your house revive; surely the blessed spirit of your departed father now sympathizes in our joy. Remember, son, to whom you owe this happiness, and emulate his virtues.

Ch. If I forget to treat my fortune as becomes the son of such a father, and the heir of such a benefactor, your warning will be my condemnation.

Fred. That will never be: the treasure that integrity has collected, cannot be better lodg'd than in the hands of honor.

Sir S. It is a mine of wealth.

Sheva. Excuse me, goot Sir Stephen, it is not a mine, for it was never out of sight of those who search'd for it: the poor man did not dig to find it; and where I now bestow it, it will be found by him again. I do not bury it in a synagogue or any other pile; I do not waste it upon vanity or public works: I leave it to a charitable heir, and build my hospital in the human heart.

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FINIS.

EPILOGUE

Spoken by MISS FARREN.

TRUTH has declar'd, and question it none can,
WOMAN was once a rib of Lordly Man;
And some perhaps wou'd risk a little pain
To hitch that rib into its place again;
For let the heart-ache, or what aught betide,
They're sure to trace it to the peccant side,
'Till fixt at length they centre all the blame
In that one rib, from whence the woman came.

Now this is downright prejudice and spleen,
A plea for thrusting us behind the scene;
And there we stood for many a long long age,
Nor let to steal one foot upon the Stage,
'Till now, when all their tyrant acts are past,
Curtfying we come, like *EPILOGUE*, at last;
And you so little are inclin'd to rout us,
You wonder how your fathers did without us.

Sure we can lightlier touch those feeling parts,
That twine about the region of your hearts;
Passion, that from the lips of Woman flows,
Warm to Man's soul with magic swiftness goes;
And tho' the sphere be small in which we move,
Great is the recompence when you approve.
Whilst Nature and your candour hold their course,
So long our Charter will remain in force;
Nor will you grudge the privilege you gave,
'Till we forget to smile upon the Brave.
Still in the slipp'ry path, that brings us near
Forbidden precincts, we must tread with fear.
Does my weak cast in tragic pathos lie?
Why then so dismal, gentle Poet, why?
In mirth oft times the nuptial knot I've ty'd,
But never was till now a Mourning Bride.
If to my share some moving speeches fall,
"Look in my face, and they'll not move at all."

Yet, not to drop at once *ELIZA*'s stile,
One word in earnest, and without a smile—
Thro' all the characters of varied life,
All the fond casts of Parent, Child, or Wife,
What part soe'er our Author has assign'd,
To that we must conform with patient mind;
So at the Drama's close when we appear,
We may obtain a parting plaudit here.

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